

Appl. No. : 09/447,524
 Filed : November 23, 1999

af
 means for billing the buyer for the purchase order; and
 means for forwarding payment to the vendor.

Please add Claims 21 as follows:

AS
 16 21. A system comprising:

~~a vendor device configured to read membership information from a membership card and configured to receive a transaction amount that is indicative of a receivable that is owed a vendor by a buyer; and~~

~~a electronic platform for factoring receivables that is not administrated by the vendor and wherein the electronic platform is configured to receive application information that has been provided directly from a plurality of buyers, wherein the received information is subsequently stored in the electronic platform, wherein the electronic platform receives the membership information and the transaction amount from the vendor device, wherein the electronic platform uses the membership information to determine a credit limit that is associated with the buyer for the purchase of goods or services, and wherein the electronic platform automatically assigns the receivable and transmits to the vendor device an authorization message upon determining that the transaction amount is within the determined credit limit.~~

REMARKS

Prior to examination, please enter the above-amendments. If the Examiner has any questions regarding these amendments, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the number listed below. The specific changes to the amended claims are shown on a separate set of pages hereto and entitled VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE, which follows the signature page of this Amendment. On this set of pages the insertions are underlined while the deletions are stricken through.

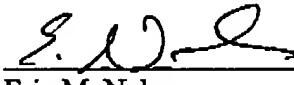
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The amendments have been made to increase claim readability, to improve grammar, and to reduce the time and effort required of those in the art to clearly understand the scope of the claim language. If the Examiner has any questions which may be answered by telephone, he is invited to call the undersigned directly.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 3/6/2002

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel, without disclaimer or prejudice, Claims 2-5 and 19.

Please amend Claims 1, 3-7, 10-18, and 20.

1. (Amended) A method of for electronic factoring, the method comprising the steps of:
 - a) providing an electronic platform for use by a plurality of buyers, vendors and at least one financial institution for factoring receivables, wherein the electronic platform is not administrated by the vendors for guaranteeing payment of receivables; receiving, in the electronic platform, application information that is provided directly from the buyers,
 - b) inputting information from users into a profile database upon on the electronic platform;
 - c) electronically assigning, in the electronic platform, each of the buyers a credit limit for purchase of goods or services, wherein the credit limit indicates a transaction limit of the buyer for purchasing goods or services in exchange for a receivable; and electronically receiving, in the electronic platform, transaction information that describes a transaction between one of the buyers and a vendor, wherein as part of the transaction the buyer is obligated to pay the vendor a receivable;
 - d) electronically accessing the electronic platform for verification of credit availability for the transaction; electronically sending the vendor a transaction authorization message; and electronically assigning, in the electronic platform, ownership of the receivable of the vendor to a financial institution.
6. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of guaranteeing payment to vendors comprises the steps of, additionally comprising:
 - a) issuing each buyer user an identifying card showing membership on the platform;
 - b) purchasing from the vendor with the identifying card; and
 - c) accessing the buyer's user's credit availability via the platform with information obtained from the identifying card.

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7. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
 - a) verifying a ~~user~~ buyer as a member of the platform; and
 - b) purchasing from the vendor.
10. (Amended) The method of claim 9, additionally comprising: ~~wherein the step of guaranteeing payment to vendors comprises the steps of:~~
 - a) ~~reassigning the receivable to the guaranteeing financial institution;~~
 - b) ~~making payment to the platform; and~~
 - c) ~~forwarding payment from the platform to the vendor.~~
11. (Amended) The method of claim 9, additionally comprising ~~wherein the step of guaranteeing payment to vendors comprises the steps of:~~
 - a) ~~reassigning the receivable to the guaranteeing financial institution;~~
 - b) ~~making payment to the guaranteeing financial institution; and~~
 - c) ~~forwarding payment from the guaranteeing financial institution to the vendor.~~
12. (Amended) The method of claim 9 ~~wherein additionally comprising: the step of guaranteeing payment to vendors comprises the steps of:~~
 - a) accessing the platform directly by the vendor for verification of credit availability; and
 - b) forwarding payment to the vendor upon verification.
13. (Amended) The method of claim 9, additionally comprising: ~~wherein the step of guaranteeing payment to vendors comprises the steps of:~~
 - a) accessing the ~~guaranteeing~~ financial institution directly by the vendor for verification of credit availability; and
 - b) forwarding payment to the vendor upon verification.
14. (Amended) The method of claim 9, additionally comprising: ~~wherein the step of guaranteeing payment to vendors comprises the steps of:~~
 - a) accessing the platform for verification of credit availability;
 - b) paying the ~~guaranteeing~~ financial institution for purchase; and
 - c) forwarding payment from the ~~guaranteeing~~ financial institution to the platform and merchant bank so that the merchant bank can credit the vendor.
15. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
 - a) maintaining ~~user~~ credit records on the platform; and

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b) periodically reviewing credit records by the financial institution for buyer credit availability.

16. (Amended) The method of claim 1, additionally comprising: wherein the step of linking at least two users comprises the steps of:

- a) creating offers by the vendor;
- b) sending the offers to an offer database on the platform for storage;
- c) comparing the offer database with the user profiles in the a profile database; and
- d) creating a list of matching offers. and user profiles; and
- e) offering users those offers that match the user's profile upon login.

17. (Amended) A method of electronic factoring, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an electronic platform for factoring receivables for use by at least one buyer, at least one vendor, and at least one financial institution, wherein the electronic platform is not administrated by the vendor;

receiving application information, in a electronic platform, that is provided directly from the buyers;

a) assigning buyers a credit limit for the purchase of goods or services, wherein the credit limit indicates a transaction limit of the buyer for purchasing goods or services in exchange for a receivable;

storing the assigned credit limit in upon a guaranteeing the electronic platform;

b) verifying a selected the buyer's identification as a member of the guaranteeing electronic platform;

c) verifying the buyer's credit amount when the buyer attempts to make a purchase;

d) subtracting the purchase amount from the buyer's available credit limit upon making a verified purchase;

e) notifying the vendor of the purchase order;

f) assigning reassigning the receivable to a guaranteeing financial institution via the guaranteeing electronic platform;

g) billing the buyer for the purchase order; and

h) forwarding payment to the vendor.

18. (Amended) An electronic factoring system for guaranteeing payment of receivables, said system comprising:

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an electronic platform;

electronic platform for factoring for use by at least one buyer, at least one vendor, and at least one financial institution, wherein the electronic platform is not administrated by the vendor;

a profile database upon the electronic platform for inputting information from the buyer users;

means for receiving application information, in the electronic platform, that has been provided directly from the buyer, wherein the received information is subsequently stored in the profile database;

means for assigning the buyers a credit limit for the purchase of goods or services; and

means for storing the assigned credit limit in the electronic platform;

means for receiving transaction information, in the electronic platform, from the vendor, wherein the transaction information identifies a transaction between the buyer and the vendor, and wherein the buyer is obligated to pay the vendor a receivable;

means for authorizing the transaction, wherein the means for authorizing uses at least in part the stored assigned credit limit; and

means for assigning ownership of the receivable via the electronic platform guaranteeing payment to vendors for users who purchase from the vendor.

20. (Amended) An electronic factoring system for guaranteeing payment of receivables, said system comprising:

an electronic platform for use by at least one buyer, at least one vendor and at least one financial institution for factoring, wherein the factoring system is not administrated by the vendor;

means for receiving, in the electronic platform, application information that has been provided directly from a buyer;

means for assigning the buyer buyers a credit limit for the purchase of goods or services;

means for storing the assigned credit limit in ~~open a~~ guaranteeing the electronic platform;

means for verifying the buyer's identification as a member of the guaranteeing electronic platform;

means for verifying the buyer's credit amount when the buyer attempts to make a purchase;

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means for subtracting the purchase amount from the buyer's available credit limit upon making a verified purchase;

means for notifying the vendor of the purchase order;

means for assigning reassigning the receivable to a guaranteeing financial institution via the guaranteeing electronic platform;

means for billing the buyer for the purchase order; and

means for forwarding payment to the vendor.

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